

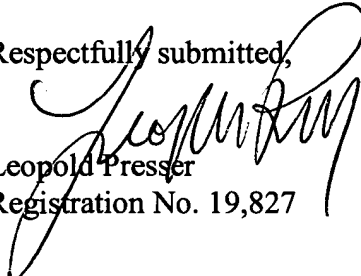
REMARKS

The present applicant, upon review of the Examiner's final rejection of the present application, as set forth in the Office Action of January 20, 2004, herewith submit a Preliminary Amendment in connection with the filing of this RCE application, and wherein the specification has been amended to clarify the inventive concept without introducing any new matter.

Furthermore, in view of the rejection of the previous claims under Hodgson, et al., in view of either Sato or Nakamura, et al., applicant has cancelled all the previous claims without prejudice or disclaimer, and herewith presents new claims 21-41, which are deemed to clearly and unambiguously define allowable subject matter distinguishing over the art, irrespective of whether the latter is considered singly or in combination.

In view of the foregoing amendments to the specification and the presentation of new Claims 21-41, the early and favorable examination of the application on the merits and issuance of the Notice of Allowance by the Examiner is earnestly solicited. However, in the event that the Examiner has any queries concerning the instantly submitted amendment, applicant's attorney respectfully requests that he be accorded the courtesy of possibly a telephone conference to discuss any matter in need of attention.

Respectfully submitted,


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